DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 179 880 CG 014 025

AUTHOR Abeles, Ronald P.: Steel, Lauri
TITLE Life Course Organization, Perceived Quality Life, and Occupational Attainment.
INSTITUTION American Institutes for Research in the Behavioral Sciences, Palo Alto, Calif.
SPONS AGENCY National Inst. of Mental Health (DHEW), Rockville, Md.
PUB DATE Sep 79
GRANT 1-ROI-MH29509-01
NOTE 40p.: Paper presented at the Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association (87th, New York, NY, September 1-5, 1979): Tables may film marginally

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Adjustment (to Environment): *Adults: Aspiration: *Career Development: Evaluation Methods: Guidance Counseling: Individual Development: *Occupational Aspiration: *Quality of Life: *Role Theory: Self Concept: Vocational Maturity
IDENTIFIERS *Project TALENT

ABSTRACT

Longitudinal data from Project TALENT are used to study how people's adult lives are patterned and how these patterns are related to their occupational achievement and perceived quality of life. Career is defined as a sequence of roles and associated activities that a person enacts within a particular life domain. The pattern of a person's life emerges through the simultaneous consideration of his/her educational, occupational, procreational, and marital careers. The temporal aspects of careers distinguish three dimensions (order, continuity, and comparative timing of role transitions) and are discussed in regard to three general theoretical perspectives (human capital, stress, and social age norms) for guiding research on "life events." The analyses suggest that these temporal aspects of careers are, in general, only weakly related to perceived quality of life and to occupational attainment when background and ability measures are controlled. However, a number of sex interactions with temporality were found. For the most part, the results were more consistent with human capital predictions then with others. (Author/BMW)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED179880

Life Course Organization, Perceived Quality of Life, and Occupational Attainment[1]

Ronald P. Abeles

Lauri Steel

American Institutes for Research

Palo Alto, California

Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Psychology Association, New York, New York, September 1 to 5, 1979.

CG 014025

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Ronald P. Abeles

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

INTRODUCTION

A decade of accumulated research findings has established that the processes of development continue throughout the life span and can be influenced by a host of subtly interacting environmental and social conditions (Binstock & Shanas, 1976; Birren & Schaie, 1977; Finch & Hayflick, 1977). However, researchers have only begun to specify the nature of these conditions, the interactions among biological, psychological, and social processes of aging, and the ways in which people's earlier lives may affect their later years. During the past decade, there has been increasing convergence between certain theoretical work in life-span developmental psychology (Goulet & Baltes, 1970; Nesselroade & Reese, 1973; Baltes & Schaie, 1973; Datan & Ginsberg, 1975; Datan & Reese, 1977) and the sociological analysis of age (Riley, Johnson, & Foner, 1972; Cain, 1964; Clausen, 1968; Neugarten & Hagestad, 1976; Elder, 1975). Out of this convergence a broad perspective is emerging for the study of human development throughout the entire life course (Abeles & Riley, 1976-77). As a perspective--as opposed to a theory--it provides a general orientation for posing research questions, analyzing data, and interpreting findings. It does not present a rigorous set of postulates as explanations for relationships between variables, but it does represent a step toward such explanations.

In this paper we employ the emerging life-course perspective in an empirical consideration of how people's adult lives are patterned and how these patterns are related to their occupational achievement and perceived quality of life. In using the terms "patterned" and "pattern" we mean to draw attention to the timing and sequencing of the various

roles and role transitions that people experience throughout their lives and, in so doing, to draw more heavily upon the sociological than on the psychological component of the life-course perspective (Neugarten & Datan, 1973; Riley, Johnson, & Foner, 1972; Clausen, 1972). A focus on patterns of roles and role transitions reflects the basic assumptions of the life-course perspective (Elder, 1977). It emphasizes that change in one's life is continuous and possible throughout the life span and it recognizes that change is multidirectional and multidetermined. Moreover, it emphasizes the possibility of preventive and corrective intervention efforts aimed at optimizing aging processes or at correcting dysfunctional aspects of aging. That is, to the extent that life course patterns are subject to modification, it may be possible to design and implement prospective social intervention programs that may prevent some of the dysfunctional consequences of aging (Danish, 1977; Harshbarger, 1973; Baltes, 1977).

While sociologists of the status attainment process have incorporated life-course or family cycle variables in their models (e.g., marital status, number of children, years of work experience, employment status), they have typically used these variables in a static fashion (Duncan, Featherman, & Duncan, 1972; Sewell & Hauser, 1975). That is, life-course variables are employed as indices of the person's social situation at a particular moment, and little concern is given to the patterning of these variables over time. In contrast to this approach, the organizing question of our inquiry is: How are the timing and sequencing of roles related to a person's occupational achievement and to his/her perceived quality of life?

In thinking about life patterns, it may be useful to borrow and expand upon the concept of "career" from occupational sociology. For our purposes, a "career" can be defined as the sequence of roles and associated activities that a person enacts within a particular domain of life. Our use of the term is purely descriptive, and its application is not limited to any particular frequently occurring or normatively prescribed sequence of roles (c.f., Brim, 1975; Spilerman, 1977; Slocum, 1966). Moreover, we are applying "career" to other life domains besides the occupational domain. Thus, we can refer to a person's sequence of moving in and out of educational roles as his/her educational career and, in a similar manner, we can speak of a person's procreational and marital careers. The pattern of a person's life emerges through the simultaneous consideration of his/her educational, occupational, procreational, and marital careers (c.f., Elder, 1975, 1977; Hill, 1970; Neugarten & Hagestad, 1976).

Historically, there has been great variation in life patterns from one cohort to the next (Modell, Furstenberg, & Hershberg, 1976; Uhlenberg, 1969; Winsborough, 1979). For example, in the U.S. the ages at which people leave their parental home and/or complete schooling have been decreasing over at least the past 100 years[2] (Neugarten & Hagestad, 1976; Riley & Foner, 1968). There also appears to be a tendency in recent cohorts to intersperse education, work, childbearing, and leisure over the life course, as is evidenced in particular by the growing number of adult women electing to return to school and/or work following a period devoted to homemaking and childbearing (Hayghe, 1978; Young, 1977). Similarly, there is great variation within age-cohorts in the patterning of lives, as is suggested by social class differences

in the ages of completion of education, of first marriage, and of childbearing (Neugarten & Hagestad, 1976).

Such variations in the sequencing and timing of roles raise the question as to the consequences that such temporal aspects of careers might have for individuals. In this paper we pursue this general question first by defining a few dimensions of temporality in careers, then by considering some leads available from economic and sociological theories as to the possible relationships between temporal variations and life outcomes (e.g., annual income, job prestige, satisfaction with one's life), and finally by briefly summarizing some data from Project TALENT.

Temporal Patterns

In conceptualizing the temporal patterns of careers, we have drawn heavily upon the work of others (e.g., Elder, 1975, 1977; Hogan, 1978; Modell, Furstenberg, & Hershberg, 1976; Neugarten & Datan, 1973) and we have arrived at three different temporal dimensions of the sequencing of roles. The first is order, which simply refers to which roles precede or follow which other roles. Order is relevant to sequences both within as well as across life domains. For instance, within the occupational life domain, order would refer to whether one was a policeman before or after being a lawyer. Across life domains, order would mean whether one assumed the role of spouse before or after that of parent.

The second dimension of temporality is discontinuity, which denotes whether or not there have been breaks in the periods of performance of a role. For instance, 10 years of experience as a husband may be achieved

either through 10 consecutive years or over 20 years, where 10 years of marriage are interspersed among 10 years of being divorced or widowed.

The comparative timing of role transitions is the final dimension of temporality, which refers to whether a person experiences a role transition at the usual age. Put another way, comparative timing is whether a person is "early," "on-time," or "late" in comparison to the age that similar others undergo that role transition (Neugarten & Datan, 1973).

Perspectives from Economics and Sociology

While there is a general belief among life-span researchers that the temporal aspects of lives are important, there is a paucity of theoretical rationales indicating what the consequences of different temporal sequences might be and how temporality is supposed to have any impact. Although rarely stated in explicit terms, there appear to be three general theoretical orientations that have been called upon to direct the few existing studies: Human Capital, Stress, and Social Age Norm Perspectives.

Human Capital Perspective

Some economists and sociologists have drawn on the Human Capital Perspective in the examination of temporal patterns of careers (Becker, 1962, 1964; Mencer, 1958; Schultz, 1971). The major assumptions of this perspective may be summarized as follows:

(a) Individuals' achievements are determined by their personal resources or "human capital," which include their abilities, skills, and knowledge.

(b) Individuals may increase their stock of human capital by investing their time and energy in activities that improve their skills, abilities, or knowledge.

(c) The greater a person's human capital, the greater his/her returns (e.g., higher salary).

Within this perspective, particular life-course patterns may facilitate or inhibit the growth of one's capital, and thereby influence one's occupational attainments. Given the interests of economists, this theoretical orientation has usually been limited to the monetary consequences of temporal patterns in occupational careers. Temporal aspects of transitions in other life domains (e.g., educational) are considered only to the degree that they influence the accumulation of human capital.

Discontinuity is the temporal aspect of career patterns that is most commonly investigated under the rubric of Human Capital. It is assumed that the longer a person enacts a role, the greater the opportunities for gaining and perfecting skills, knowledge, and social assets (e.g., seniority), and hence the greater one's financial returns. Discontinuities in enacting a role (educational or occupational) are assumed to have negative consequences by interfering with the accumulation of human capital or by resulting in the obsolescence of one's human capital (e.g., a person's skills or knowledge may fall behind the state of the art through the lack of practice and of exposure to new knowledge and skills). Discontinuity has been employed frequently as explanations of differences in men's and women's salaries, where the cause of lower women's salaries is sought in their shorter duration of work experience and in the discontinuities in their occupational

careers (Mincer & Polacheck, 1974; Polachek, 1975; Brown, 1976; Kahne, 1978; Huttner, 1977; Stevens & Herriot, 1975; Jusenius, 1976; Hudis, 1976).

Although there would seem to be theoretical reasons for also studying the order and comparative timing of role transitions from a Human Capital viewpoint, they have not received the same degree of attention. It is conceivable that the assumption of some roles before other roles might interfere with the acquisition of the requisite cognitive, physical, and social skills and capabilities for high-paying occupations. For example, assuming the role of parent before completing school might mean that a person was less able to devote time and energy to schooling and thereby not be able to obtain as much benefit from his/her education. Similarly, it is possible that early entry into a role (in comparison to other similar people) might put one at a competitive advantage by providing an earlier or longer opportunity to obtain skills, knowledge, or abilities associated with the role (e.g., early entrance into an occupation). However, in other instances, being "late" may be advantageous, if the tardiness resulted from time spent increasing human capital in preparation for the role. A few studies suggest the utility of considering order and comparative timing. Featherman and Carter (1976) found that delays in entering postsecondary programs cost individuals approximately one year in educational achievement and over $1,000 in annual earnings. In a study of Detroit women, Freedman and Coombs (1966) reported that early marriage and parenthood, a short interval between marriage and parenthood, and close spacing of the births of children were all detrimental to the accumulation of good and assets. Similarly, Card and Wise (1978) in their study of Project TALENT

participants found that adolescent parenthood resulted in low levels of educational and occupational attainment.

Stress Perspective

From a sociological or psychological viewpoint, the importance of role transitions for one's later life may stem, in part, from their being stressful[3] (e.g., Lowenthal, Thurnher, & Chiriboga, 1975). That is, they often place a person in circumstances where his/her usual modes of behavior are either inappropriate or ineffective. This results in certain physiological and psychological reactions that are directed at coping with the challenge of the situation (Eisdorfer & Wilkie, 1977; Hultsch & Plemons, 1979). Regardless of its sources, stress has been postulated as an antecedent of heart disease, mental illness, and other health risks associated with aging (Dohrenwend & Dohrenwend, 1974; Glass, 1977). Similarly, we might expect that stress interferes with the performance of roles and thus might lead to lower levels of educational and occupational attainment as well as to feelings of dissatisfaction with those domains of life where one is experiencing stress. In general, it has been assumed that role transitions are stressful to the extent that a person experiences a large number of them in a given time period, that the interval between transitions is short, and that the magnitude of change in one's life is great.

Research on stress and role transitions has developed under the rubric of so-called "Life Events," which include role transitions as well as other experiences (e.g., death of a spouse, changing jobs, marriage, geographical mobility). However, this research tradition has given little consideration to how these events fit into the patterns

of people's lives (Hultsch & Plemons, 1979). The widely used Social Readjustment Scale, for instance, does not give any weight to the sequencing or timing of events in calculating the degree of stress to which a person has been exposed (Holmes & Rahe, 1967). Each event receives a single score regardless of when it occurred relative to other events or to its temporal context in a person's life course.

Thus, it may be fruitful to consider how order, discontinuity, and comparative timing could be relevant from the Stress Perspective. First, we need to note that whether a role transition (i.e., life event) is stressful or not may depend on how unanticipated it is (Dohrenwend, 1977; Neugarten, 1970). Role transitions for which a person has been able to prepare in advance--in terms of knowing whether and when they will occur--are probably less stressful than they would otherwise be. Second, role transitions are likely to be more stressful to the extent that they engender role conflicts. That is, taking on a new role may make the performance of both new and old roles problematic. From these two premises, we can hypothesize that the order of transitions is stressful to the degree that it is unanticipated (e.g., pregnancy before marriage) or results in conflicting role demands (e.g., starting a full-time job while still completing school).

Predictions concerning discontinuity between role transitions flow directly from the general premises underlying stress research. The greater the number of discontinuities in a life domain (i.e., the greater number of life events or role transitions), the greater the stress experienced.

Finally, comparative timing may also influence the stressfulness of a role transition through a variety of processes. First, by observing the experiences of other individuals, people may develop expectations about which role transitions they will undergo and about the timing and ordering of these transitions. Such expectations may enable them to marshal their physical, social, and psychic resources in advance of the transitions, thereby mitigating their ultimate stressfulness. Second, regardless of a person's expectations, being on time may place him/her in a better position to obtain social support that may be critical in coping with stress (Cobb, 1976). When a role transition is experienced at the same time or close in time to when one's peers are undergoing it, then one is likely to be able to draw upon their experiences as sources of informational and emotional support (c.f., Kahn's (1979) concept of "convoy of social support"). Third, being early or late may be stressful to the degree that there are social norms governing the timing of transitions and being "off-time" exposes a person to social sanctions (Bacon, 1974; Neugarten & Datan, 1973).

For these reasons, we would expect that, in general, role transitions occurring either early or late would be relatively more stressful than those occurring on time. For example, the death of a spouse is probably more stressful when it occurs early as opposed to on time or late, where early, on time, and late are defined in comparison to when spouses usually die (Blau, 1973). However, in some instances, being late might provide the person with more opportunities to gather the necessary economic, social, or psychic resources to cope with a role transition. For example, becoming a father later in life may be less stressful than earlier, when one is faced with a variety of other

demands (e.g., potential conflicts between parental and occupational roles) and when one's financial resources are less developed (Nydegger, 1973).

Social Age Norm Perspective

The basic premises of a Normative Perspective are that there are social norms governing the order, continuity, and timing of role transitions and that deviations from the prescribed patterns result in the application of social sanctions (Neugarten & Datan, 1973; Elder, 1977). People are presumed to be aware of these norms and to attempt to pattern their lives accordingly. If role transitions take place at the "wrong" time (either too early or too late) or out of sequence (e.g., childbirth before marriage), then various social sanctions may be brought to bear against the transgressor. As a result of these social sanctions, deviants face barriers that hinder their educational and occupational advancement. By extension, it seems reasonable to anticipate that deviancy should also lead to greater difficulty in the enactment of roles and consequently to dissatisfaction with one's life (all things being equal). For example, until recently, adolescent mothers have been treated as social deviants and segregated from their contemporaries, which interfered with their ability to complete their schooling.

There is some evidence that people are aware of the appropriate ages for such role transitions as marriage, completing school, and getting a job (Neugarten, Moore, & Lowe, 1965), and there are, no doubt, norms surrounding the order in which transitions are supposed to occur (e.g., career lines in Slocum's [1966] sense). Most likely there are normative expectations associated with duration and continuity of roles as well. "Too much" discontinuity in the enactment of a role is probably interpeted as evidence

of lack of commitment to the role, of inability to perform the role, or indecisiveness. Conversely, "too much" continuity (i.e., a long duration) in performing a role may also result in negative reactions (e.g., "He is in a rut, and it is high time he did something new").

However, the presumed links between awareness of appropriate ages for role transitions, the application of social sanctions, and the resulting negative consequences for individuals have not been sufficiently tested (Elder, 1977). One recent step in this direction is Hogan's (1978) study, in which he showed that those experiencing the presumed normative pattern of school, job, and marriage had more stable marriages than those who experienced deviant orderings. Hogan's study can only be construed as an indirect test of the Normative Perspective, since there were no measures of either the presumed normativeness of particular patterns of roles or the presumed processes leading to marital dissolutions. This points out one difficulty in applying the Social Age Norm Perspective: the norms surrounding life-course patterns probably differ from one social group to the next and probably change from one cohort to the next (Neugarten & Peterson, 1957; Riley, Johnson, & Foner, 1972). Thus, it cannot be safely assumed--without some confirming evidence--that particular patterns are normatively held by the population being studied. In other words, in order to evoke norms as explanations, one must first show that they are operative.

Although these various theoretical models do not always lead to unequivocal predictions, they do suggest that the temporal aspects of life course organization can affect individuals' achievement and quality of life. Insofar as variations in the comparative timing, ordering, and discontinuity of major role transitions facilitate the accumulation

of resources (human capital), they may be expected to enhance one's subsequent occupational achievement and perceived quality of life. To the extent that such variations violate social norms and/or place greater stress on the individual, they can be expected to contribute to lowered occupational achievements and lowered satisfactions with one's quality of life in the relevant life domains.

METHODS

Ongoing research studied based on Project TALENT data have provided an opportunity to examine the temporal patterning of individuals' lives during the early adult years. The Project TALENT data base contains extensive information collected over a 15-year period from a sample initially of 400,000 men and women who are now in their mid-30s. The overall design for TALENT called for the comprehensive assessment of individuals' cognitive skills and other characteristics while in high school (grades 9 through 12) with periodic follow-ups on a variety of topics to be conducted following graduation from high school.

The TALENT Samples

The initial Project TALENT samples were chosen to be representative of the national population of American high school students and also to be large enough to enable the study of TALENT participants pursuing various occupations (e.g., physicians, engineers, teachers) and following various educational and marital paths. To achieve these goals, a stratified random sample of all secondary schools in the United States was drawn,

consisting of 1,225 schools--987 senior high schools and 238 associated junior high schools; and all students in grades 9 through 12 in these schools were tested by Project TALENT in 1960 (Flanagan, Dailey, Shaycoft, Orr, & Goldberg, 1962).

The TALENT Data

All TALENT participants answered a battery of tests and inventories, which was designed to provide baseline data on the aptitudes and abilities of these individuals, as well as to assess their backgrounds, interests, aspirations, and various other personal characteristics. At the same time, information was also collected on the characteristics of each of the schools in the TALENT sample (Wise, McLaughlin, & Steel, 1977).

Since 1960, mail follow-up surveys have been conducted one, five, and 11 years following each class' graduation from high school. These surveys have focused on postsecondary educational experiences, early career choices and experiences, marital and childbearing status, plans for the future, and the participants' evaluations of and satisfactions with their educational and occupational careers to date and with other aspects of their lives.

The response rates to these mail follow-ups varied from over 60% for 1960 twelfth graders followed up one year after high school (1961) to about 20% for 1960 ninth graders followed up 11 years after high school (1974). To overcome the problem of potential nonresponse bias, special surveys of representative samples of nonrespondents to each follow-up were conducted (generally about 2,500 individuals for each grade cohort). Members of the special samples selected for intensive follow-up were contacted by telephone or in person to secure their answers to the

the questionnaire items. By developing special case weighting procedures for the regular and special sample survey respondents, data from the TALENT original and follow-up samples can be used to derive essentially unbiased estimates of nationally representative population parameters (McLaughlin, Fulscher, & Yen, 1974; Wise, 1977). For example, those who responded to the initial 11-year follow-up mail survey had 1960 academic aptitude scores that averaged .30 of a standard deviation higher than the mean of the entire 1960 sample. Applying the case weight corrections based on the special survey of nonrespondents resulted in the mean academic aptitude score being only .06 of a standard deviation greater than the original 1960 mean, which is less than the potential error due to sampling alone (Abeles & Wise, in press). Tests such as this demonstrate s sufficient correction for attrition biases to permit analyses such as those presented in this paper.

The Analysis Sample

A sample of 2,010 men and 2,025 women was drawn from those members of the TALENT ninth-grade cohort who had responded to all three of the follow-up surveys. Because of the use of case weights, however, it is necessary to use the so-called "Effective Sample Size" (Effective N) in calculating tests of statistical significance. Effective N refers to the size of a sample of uniformly weighted individuals that would have the same power and stability as the actual weighted sample.[4] Since the Effective N is smaller, and usually much smaller than the raw N, it results in more conservative tests of statistical significance than those based on the raw N (Wise, McLaughlin, & Steel, 1977). The Effective N for the analyses discussed herein is 755 males and 694 females.

As noted earlier, TALENT data cover only the period from high school through early adulthood (to the approximate age of 29). Consequently, they pose a potential difficulty in analyzing life patterns: a sizable minority of respondents will not have undergone some of the role transitions in question by the time of the most recent follow-up survey. For example, 14% of the ninth-grade cohort had not married and 22% had not had children by 11 years after high school graduation. To some unknown degree, our calculations of the mean ages at various role transitions will be underestimates, since those experiencing the transitions at later ages will pull the mean upward. This has particular relevance for our measures of comparative timing in that some of those now considered "on time" might eventually be categorized as "early." However, since we are interested in the relationships between variables and are willing to restrict their generalizability to the period covered by the TALENT survey, this limitation should not cause us undue concern.

Operationalization of Variables

Comparative Timing

The measures of comparative timing of role transitions were based upon the ages at which an individual experienced each role transition. The person's age (to the nearest year) at his/her first marriage and at the birth of his/her first child had been asked directly in the 11-year follow-up survey. However, it was necessary to estimate the ages at completion of schooling and at the start of one's first job. The latter was calculated by subtracting the person's number of years of full-time work experience from his/her age, both measured at the 11-year follow-up survey. Age at

completion of schooling was calculated by subtracting the participant's birthdate from the data at which his/her highest educational degree had been obtained. For those participants who had additional schooling beyond their highest degree, it was not possible to estimate accurately the date of completion of schooling, so all such cases (about 49%) were combined into a single category of "incomplete data" in the analyses.

Two further steps were involved in the calculation of comparative timing after establishing the respondent's age at each role transition. First, the age at which the person experienced a role transition was subtracted from the mean age at which his/her sex-by-SES group experienced that transition. Second, the distribution of resulting difference scores was categorized into "early," "on time," and "late," depending on whether the person's score was, respectively, more than one standard deviation below the mean, between one standard deviation below and above the mean, or greater than one standard deviation above the mean difference score. For the measures of comparative timing of marriage and of birth of first child, a category was included for those who had never been married or who had not had children as of the 11-year follow-up study.

Order

The order of the role transitions was indexed by noting for each pair of role transitions whether the age at one transition was less than, the same as, or greater than the age for the other transition.

Discontinuity

Two dichotomous variables were created to indicate whether a person had interrupted his/her schooling or work. These measures were derived from the respondents' reported activities at the time of each follow-up survey and their reports of the amount of schooling received and of work experience obtained.

Occupational Attainment

Two measures of occupational attainment were employed. Annual earnings were derived from answers to the question of "How much was your pay or other earnings (before deductions) ON THIS JOB [i.e., current job] as of September 30, 1974?". The mean and standard deviation for annual earnings were $11,181 and $5,284 respectively for full-time workers. Occupational prestige was based on an adapted version of the NORC Occupational Prestige Scale (Hodge, Siegel, & Rossi, 1964), which ranged from 15 (lunch counter attendant) to 82 (medical doctor), with a mean of 45 and a standard deviation of 13 for this sample.

RESULTS

Relationships Between Temporal Aspects of Careers and Occupational Attainment

As can be seen in Table 1, several of the variables examined were significantly related to either occupational prestige or earnings. For example, delays in experiencing each of the role transitions were associated with higher job prestige; delays in starting work were also associated with

higher earnings. The ordering of various role transitions also related to occupational prestige and earnings in several instances. In particular, completing school after experiencing other role transitions was associated with higher occupational prestige, while delaying starting work until after completing school, marrying, and having children was associated with lower earnings. Continuity of work was also associated with higher occupational prestige and earnings.

However, almost all of the significant relationships shown in Table 1 disappeared when the effects of other background factors (e.g., sex, SES, academic aptitude, high school grades, occupational aspirations when in high school, and marital status and educational level at age 29) were controlled through multiple regressions (for the comparative timing and ordering of role transitions) and multiple classification analyses (for the continuity of role activities). Only one of the main effects held up: the relationships between comparative timing of first job and earnings ($\beta = -.07$; $p \leq .001$).

Interestingly, there were many instances in which the comparative timing or ordering of role transitions affected men and women in different ways. Delays in starting work were associated with higher occupational prestige for men, but lower prestige for wormen ($\beta = -.11$; $p \leq .001$).[5] Delayed marriage, on the other hand, was related to lower occupational prestige and earnings among men, but higher prestige and earnings among women ($\beta = .06$ for prestige; $\beta = .08$ for earnings; both $p \leq .01$). Delayed childbearing was also associated with lower prestige among men and higher prestige among women ($\beta = .07$; $p \leq .001$). With regard to the ordering of role transitions, starting work before marriage and waiting longer after marriage to have children were associated with

lower occupational prestige for men but higher prestige for women (β = .11 for work-marriage; β = .14 for marriage-childbearing; both $p \leq .01$). Completing school before work was related to higher prestige for men and lower prestige for women (β = -.09; $p \leq .01$).

Finally, an interaction between continuity of work and occupational category was noted. That is, continuity of work continued to have an appreciable impact on earnings among workers in nonprofessional careers (β = -.07; $p \leq .001$) but the effects on job prestige disappeared when sex, SES, and level of education were controlled in the multiple classification analyses.

To summarize briefly, the temporal aspects of careers appear to bear a weak relationship to subsequent occupational attainment, and much of this relationship appears to be attributable to the control variables that were examined. Finally, the form of the relationships seems to vary depending upon the individual's sex.

[Insert Table 1 about here]

Relationships Between Temporal Aspects of Careers and Quality of Life

Individuals' satisfaction with six different aspects of life quality (material well-being, health and safety, relationship with spouse, having and raising children, learning, and work) was measured using the Flanagan Quality of Life scale (Flanagan & Russ-Eft, 1975). The relationships between temporal aspects of careers and satisfaction with one's quality of life in these areas are shown in Table 2.

As can be seen, there are numerous instances of significant relationships between the comparative timing and ordering of significant role transitions and satisfaction with particular aspects of one's quality of life, but there is no consistent pattern of effects. For example, being relatively early in completing schooling was associated with greater satisfaction with one's work and with childbearing, but with less satisfaction with one's learning and material well-being. In only a few instances, all concerning the comparative timing of marriage, was being on-time associated with the highest satisfaction levels. With regard to the order in which role transitions were experienced, there are even fewer instances of significant relationships to quality of life. It is of interest to note, however, that experiencing two (or more) role transitions at the same age was generally associated with the lowest satisfaction levels.

Few of these relationships remained significant when other predictors of life quality (e.g., educational level, marital status, number of children, employment status, prestige of own or spouse's occupation), and sex were controlled. Being relatively early in completing school and in starting work related to greater satisfaction with one's work (β = .12 for school; β = -.14 for work; $p \leq .001$). Having children relatively late was associated with greater satisfaction with one's material well-being (β = .07; $p \leq .001$), health (β = .05; $p \leq .01$), and childbearing (β = .05; $p \leq .01$). Similarly, being relatively late in marrying was associated with decreased satisfaction with childbearing (β = .09; $p \leq .001$).

Again, numerous significant sex interactions were found with β's ranging from .08 to .18. In general, early role transitions were less

likely to inhibit men's quality of life than women's, although the differences were modest in most cases. These temporal aspects of careers accounted for up to one or two percent of the explained variance in satisfaction with one's work; in other areas they typically accounted for less than one percent of the variance after the other factors had been considered. However, the large number of significant sex interactions merits further investigation.

[Insert Table 2 about here]

DISCUSSION

It is evident from this cursory summary that these temporal aspects of careers are, in general, only weakly related to perceived quality of life and to occupational attainment in this particular cohort at this particular point in the respondents' lives. After the introduction of various background variables as controls, the temporal variables either fail to significantly increase the percentage of explained variance (R^2) or increase it by only one or two percent. Perhaps most tellingly, the introduction of these controls changes many relationships from statistically significant to insignificant, suggesting that most of the associations between the temporal and criterion variables are spurious. Furthermore, the lack of any consistent overall pattern of relationships among the temporal and particular criterion variables argues for the weakness of the relationships between them.

This dark picture does not necessarily mean that further research on temporality should be abandoned, for there is one bright--at least

less dark--spot in the picture. The number of sex interactions with temporality implies that temporal aspects of careers may be more important for some types of people than for others. The problem lies in identifying who those people might be. The solution to this problem will need to be sought in such theoretical perspectives as Human Capital, Stress, and Social Age Norms. In the present exploratory study, we have been content merely to use these perspectives to suggest the potential importance of temporality and, therefore, to state our working hypotheses at a very abstract level. For example, we noted that from the Human Capital Perspective, temporal aspects of careers would be associated with occupational attainment to the extent that they facilitated or hindered the accumulation of human capital. We did not specify when or which temporal aspects would or would not facilitate the accumulation of human capital. For our initial purpose of demonstrating relationships between temporal and criterion variables, this lack of specificity was tolerable. But, obviously we need now to pursue these perspectives more thoroughly in order to arrive at more precise guides in our search for those conditions where temporality is a significant factor.

Given our focus on temporal factors, it is ironic that one basis for the weak relationships might be the timing of the survey itself. On the one hand, it may have been too <u>early</u> to detect some relationships between temporality and occupational attainment. We should remember that the period of study encompasses the years during which schooling is completed and, for many, occupations and families are just beginning. Perhaps the impact of various temporal patterns on occupational prestige or income is not felt as strongly at the beginning as later on in one's occupational career. Another possibility is that the nature of the

relationships may change as people move farther into their occupational careers.

Similarly, we might have been too late to detect relationships between temporality and perceived quality of life. Our working premises have been that role transitions are stressful[6] and that stress in a life domain is associated with dissatisfactions in that domain. Since people are likely to experience maximal stress at the time of a transition (or shortly thereafter) and since people's evaluations of their life quality--like attitudes in general--are problably influenced more by proximal than distal circumstances and experiences, then measuring perceived quality of life many years after the role transition or pattern of transitions is likely to capture only attenuated relationships. In any event, the timing of the measurement of the criterion variables would seem to be an important factor in determining the strength of the observed relationships.

Further investigations of temporal aspects of life patterns will require a fuller development of various theoretical perspectives. For example, at present, the life-course perspective in combination with the Human Capital, Stress, or Social Age Norm perspectives provide some broad understandings of the potential consequences of different life patterns. However, these perspectives are not yet sufficiently developed to the point where they can offer specific hypotheses about the interrelationships among particular life patterns and particular outcomes for individuals (e.g., economic consequences). In addition, future studies employing these perspectives need to include measures of the presumed processes linking career patterns to outcomes. If continuity of time on the job is supposed to lead to increased human capital, there

should be measures of human capital (e.g., improved skills, greater knowledge); if role transitions are said to cause stress, there should be indices of stress; and if being off-time is thought to result in the application of social sanctions, then there should be measures of the presumed norms and of the employment of social sanctions. In order for research on the organization of lives to progress in a meaningful and constructive fashion, a more detailed specification and operationalization of these perspectives and the development of additional perspectives are required to guide future investigations.

Moreover, the existing perspectives do not provide a means of conceptualizing or operationalizing the gestalt of people's lives. In our explorations, for example, we have snapshots of selected points in people's lives, but have only a fuzzy picture of what transpired between those points. In this study we limited ourselves to the pattern of roles that initiate or terminate careers without regard to other role transitions or to the manner in which roles are enacted. Since roles in each life domain continue over time and coexist with roles in other life domains, a major challenge facing life-course researchers is the development of concepts and indices tht capture both the synchrony and continuity of people's careers.

Footnotes

1. The research reported herein was carried out in conjunction with a study of sex differences in the realization of achievement potential, under the direction of J. J. Card, Lauri Steel, and Ronald P. Abeles (NIMH Grant No. 1-ROI-MH29509-01).

2. However, since 1960, the age of marriage has been increasing (Sweet, 1977).

3. Stress seems to be like art: everyone knows it when he sees it, but he can't tell you what it is. There appear to be almost as many definitions of stress as there are researchers (Eisdorfer & Wilkie, 1977).

4. The Effective N is equal to the square of the sum of the weights divided by the sum of the squared weights or, alternatively, it is equal to the sum of the weights divided by the weighted mean weight.

5. In the case of interactions, the beta coefficient (β) reflects the magnitude of the difference between the slope of the gression line for mean and that for women. Significance tests are two-tailed.

6. For the sake of the current discussion, it is assumed that normative factors related to temporality have their impact via diminishing or exacerbating the stress accompanying role transitions.

REFERENCES

Abeles, R. P., & Riley, M. W. A life-course perspective on the later years of life: Some implications for research. Social Science Research Council Annual Report, New York, 1976-77.

Abeles, R. P., & Wise, L. L. Coping with attrition in a longitudinal study: The case of Project TALENT. Journal of Economics and Business (in press).

Bacon. L. Early motherhood, accelerated role transition, and social pathologies. Social Forces, 1974, 52(3), 333-341.

Baltes, P. B. Functional age and social policy in aging: Perspectives from the behavioral sciences. Paper presented at the Conference on Aging and Social Policy, Vichy, France, April 1977.

Baltes, P. B., & Schaie, K. W. (Eds.). Life-span developmental psychology: Personality and socialization. New York: Academic Press, 1973.

Becker, G. S. Investment in human capital: A theoretical analysis. The Journal of Political Economy (Supplement), October 1962, 70, 9-49.

Becker, G. S. Human capital. New York: National Bureau of Economic Research, 1964.

Binstock, R. H., & Shanas, E. (Eds.). Handbook of aging and the social sciences. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1976.

Birren, J. E., & Schaie, K. W. (Eds.). Handbook of the psychology of aging. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1977.

Blau, Z. S. Old age in a changing society. New York: Franklin Watts, 1973.

Brim, O. G., Jr. Career paths and personality consequences: A memorandum for discussion. Paper presented at the Social Science Research Council Conference on Occupational Career Analysis, Greensboro, North Carolina, March 26-28, 1975.

Brown, G. D. How type of unemployment affects earnings differences by sex. Monthly Labor Review, 1976, 99(7), 25-30.

Cain, L. D., Jr. Life course and social structure. In R. E. L. Faris (Ed.), Handbook of modern sociology. Chicago: Rand McNally, 1964.

Card, J. J., & Wise, L. L. Teenage mothers and teenage fathers: The impact of early childbearing on the parents' personal and professional lives. Family Planning Perspectives, July-August 1978, 10(4), 199-204.

Clausen, J. A. (Ed.). Socialization and society. Boston: Little, Brown, 1968.

Clausen, J. A. The life course of individuals. In M. W. Riley, M. Johnson, & A Foner (Eds.), Aging and society: Vol. III, A sociology of age stratification. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1972.

Cobb, S. Social support as a moderator of life stress. Psychosomatic Medicine, 1976, 38(5), 300-314.

Danish, S. J. Human development and human services: A marriage proposal. In I. Iscoe, B. L. Bloom, & C. D. Spielberger (Eds.), Community psychology in transition. New York: Hemisphere Press, 1977.

Datan, N., & Ginsberg, L. H. (Eds.). Life-span developmental psychology: Normative life crises. New York: Academic Press, 1975.

Datan, N., & Reese, H. W. Life-span developmental psychology: Dialectical perspectives on experimental research. New York: Academic Press, 1977.

Dohrenwend, B. S. Anticipation and control of stressful life events: An exploratory analysis. In J. S. Strauss, H. B. Babigan, & M. Roff (Eds.), Proceedings of conference on methods of longitudinal research in psychopathology. New York: Plenum, 1977.

Dohrenwend, B. S., & Dohrenwend, B. P. (Eds.). Stressful life events: Their nature and effects. New York: Wiley, 1974.

Duncan, O. D., Featherman, D. L., & Duncan, B. Socioeconomic background and achievement. New York: Seminar Press, 1972.

Eisdorfer, C., & Wilkie, F. Stress, disease, aging, and behavior. In J. E. Birren & K. W. Schaie (Eds.), Handbook of the psychology of aging. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1977.

Elder, G. H., Jr. Age differentiation and the life course. In A. Inkeles, J. Coleman, & N. Smelser (Eds.), Annual Review of Sociology, Vol. I. Palo Alto, Calif.: Annual Reviews, Inc., 1975.

Elder, G. H., Jr. Family history and the life course. Journal of Family History, 1977, 2, 279-304.

Featherman, D. L., & Carter, T. M. Discontinuities in schooling and the socioeconomic life cycle. In W. H. Sewell, R. M. Hauser, & D. L. Featherman (Eds.), Schooling and achievement in American society. New York: Academic Press, 1976.

Finch, C. E., & Hayflick, L. (Eds.). Handbook of the biology of aging. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1977.

Flanagan, J. C., Dailey, J. T., Shaycoft, M. F., Gorham, W. A., Orr, D. B., & Goldberg, I. Design for a study of American youth. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1962.

Flanagan, J. C., & Russ-Eft. D. An empirical study to aid in formulating educational goals. Palo Alto, Calif.: American Institutes for Research, 1975.

Freedman, R., & Coombs, L. Childspacing and family economic position. American Sociological Review, 1966, 31, 631-648.

Glass, D. C. Behavior patterns, stress, and coronary disease. Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1977.

Goulet, L. R., & Baltes, P. B. (Eds.). Life-span developmental psychology: Research and theory. New York: Academic Press, 1970.

Harshbarger, D. Some ecological implications for the organization of human intervention throughout the life span. In P. B. Baltes & K. W. Schaie (Eds.), Life-span developmental psychology: Personality and socialization. New York: Academic Press, 1973.

Hayghe, H. Special labor force reports--summaries. Monthly Labor Review, February 1978, 51-54.

Hill, R. Family development in three generations. Cambridge, Mass.: Schenkman, 1970.

Hodge, R. W., Siegel, P. M., & Rossi, P. Occupational prestige in the United States. American Journal of Sociology, 1964, 70, 286-302.

Hogan, D. P. Order of events in the life course. American Sociological Review, 1978, 48, 573-586.

Holmes, T. H., & Rahe, R. H. The social readjustment rating scale. Journal of Psychosomatic Research, 1967, 11, 213-218.

Hudis, P. M. Commitment to work and to family: Marital status differences in women's earnings. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 1976, 38(2), 267-278.

Hultsch, D. R., & Plemons, J. K. Life events and life-span development. In P. B. Baltes & O. G. Brim, Jr. (Eds.), Life-span development and behavior, Vol. 2. New York: Academic Press, 1979.

Huttner, T. The effects of discontinuous participation in the labor force. Unpublished manuscript, 1977. (Available from Sloan School, Massachusetts Institute of Techology, Cambridge, Mass. 02138.)

Jusenius, C. Economists' approaches to sex segregation in the labor market. In H. S. Parnes & A. Kohen (Eds.), Labor market experience of non-college youth: A longitudinal analysis. Columbus: Ohio State University, 1976.

Kahn, R. L. Aging and social support. In M. W. Riley (Ed.), Aging from birth to death. Boulder, Col.: Westview Press, 1979.

Kahne, H. Economic research on women and families. Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society, 1978, 3(31), 652-661.

Lowenthal, M. F., Thurnher, M., & Chiriboga, D. Four stages of life. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1975.

McLaughlin, D. H., Fulscher, G. W., & Yen, W. M. Project TALENT's Special Sample: Is it necessary? Palo Alto, Calif.: American Institutes for Research, 1974.

Mincer, J. Investment in human capital and personal income distribution. The Journal of Political Economy, August 1958, 66, 281-302.

Mincer, J., & Polachek, S. W. Family investments in human capital: Earnings of women. Journal of Political Economy, 1974, 82(2), S76-S108.

Modell, J., Furstenberg, F. F., Jr., & Hershberg, T. Social change and transitions to adulthood in historical perspective. Journal of Family History, 1976, 1, 7-32.

Nesselroade, J. R., & Reese, H. W. (Eds.). Life-span developmental psychology: Methodological issues. New York: Academic Press, 1973.

Neugarten, B. Adaptation and the life cycle. Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry, 1970, 4, 71-100.

Neugarten, B. L., & Datan, N. Sociological perspectives on the life cycle. In P. B. Baltes & K. W. Schaie (Eds.), Life-span developmental psychology: Personality and socialization. New York: Academic Press, 1973.

Neugarten, B. L., & Hagestad, G. O. Age and the life course. In R. H. Binstock & E. Shanas (Eds.), Handbook of aging and the social sciences. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1976.

Neugarten, B. L., Moore, J. W., & Lowe, J. C. Age norms, age constraints, and adult socialization. American Journal of Sociology, 1965, 70, 710-717.

Neugarten, B. L., & Peterson, W. A. A study of the American age-grade system. Proceedings of the Fourth Congress of the International Association of Gerontology, Vol. 3, 1957, 497-502.

Nydegger, C. N. Late and early fathers. Paper presented at annual meeting of the Gerontological Society, Miami Beach, 1973.

Polachek, S. W. Discontinuous labor force participation and its effect on women's market earnings. In C. Lloyd (Ed.), Sex, discrimination, and the division of labor. New York: Columbia University Press, 1975.

Riley, M. W., & Foner, A. (Eds.). Aging and society, Vol. I. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1968.

Riley, M. W., Johnson, M., & Foner, A. (Eds.). Aging and society, Vol. III. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1972.

Schultz, T. W. Investment in human capital: The role of education and of research. New York: Free Press, 1971.

Sewell, W. H., & Hauser, R. M. Education, occupation and earnings. New York: Academic Press, 1975.

Slocum, W. L. Occupational careers. Chicago: Aldine, 1966.

Spilerman, S. Careers, labor market structure, and socioeconomic achievement. American Journal of Sociology, 1977, 83, 551-593.

Stevens, J. A., & Herriot, R. A. Current earnings differentials for men and women: Some exploratory regression analyses. Paper presented at Conference on Reconciliation of Survey and Administrative Income Distribution Statistics through Data Linkage, sponsored by Bureau of the Census, 1975.

Sweet, J. A. Demography and the family. In A. Inkeles, J. Coleman, & N. Smelser (Eds.), Annual Review of Sociology, Vol. 3. Palo Alto, Calif.: Annual Reviews, Inc., 1977.

Uhlenberg, P. A study of cohort life cycles: Cohorts of native born Massachusetts women, 1830-1920. Population Studies, 1969, 23(3), 407-420.

Winsborough, H. H. Changes in the transition to adulthood. In M. W. Riley (Ed.), Aging from birth to death: Interdisciplinary perspectives. Boulder, Col.: Westview Press, 1979.

Wise, L. L. The fight against attrition in longitudinal research. Paper presented at the meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New York, April 4-8, 1977.

Wise, L. L., McLaughlin, D. H., & Steel, L. The Project TALENT data bank handbook. Palo Alto, Calif.: American Institutes for Research, 1977.

Young, A. M. Going back to school at 35 and over. Monthly Labor Review, 1977, 100(7), 43-35.

Table 1

Relationships between Comparative Timing and Ordering of Role Transitions and Continuity of Role Activities and Occupational Attainment as of Age 29

Life Course Variable	Job Prestige [a] Mean	Job Prestige [a] Significance (N)	Annual Income [b] Mean	Annual Income [b] Significance (N)
COMPARATIVE TIMING OF ROLE TRANSITIONS				
Completion of School:		F=36.07***		NS
Early	36.85	(95)		
On-Time	46.98	(430)		
Late	53.77	(97)		
Starting Work:		F= 9.03***		F= 7.42***
Early	41.94	(188)	9,703	(153)
On-Time	44.06	(812)	11,513	(657)
Late	48.36	(120)	11,435	(74)
Marriage:		F=10.20***		NS
Early	39.35	(130)		
On-Time	44.50	(642)		
Late	45.36	(163)		
Birth of First Child:		F= 7.91***		NS
Early	39.46	(145)		
On-Time	42.54	(453)		
Late	45.53	(119)		
ORDERING OF ROLE TRANSITIONS [d]				
Complete School-Start Work:		F=55.56***		F= 19.65***
Age School < Age Work	37.73	(149)	8,663	(105)
Age School = Age Work	45.35	(164)	11,288	(142)
Age School > Age Work	52.76	(241)	12,831	(199)
Complete School-Marriage:		F=23.49***		F= 3.94*
Age School < Age Marriage	41.54	(212)	10,759	(181)
Age School = Age Marriage	46.98	(75)	11,436	(54)
Age School > Age Marriage	51.36	(172)	12,567	(138)
Complete School-Birth of First Child:		F= 3.37**		NS
Age School < Age Childbirth	43.23	(226)		
Age School = Age Childbirth	39.80	(37)		
Age School > Age Childbirth	48.63	(67)		
Start Work-Marriage:		F= 3.95*		F= 10.10***
Age Work < Age Marriage	43.33	(568)	11,783	(483)
Age Work = Age Marriage	47.30	(93)	12,357	(78)
Age Work > Age Marriage	44.28	(268)	9,890	(176)
Start Work-Birth of First Child:		F= 7.60***		F= 23.41***
Age Work < Age Childbirth	43.37	(506)	11,876	(417)
Age Work = Age Childbirth	44.39	(48)	12,357	(42)
Age Work > Age Childbirth	39.10	(158)	8,177	(95)
Marriage-Birth of First Child:		F=12.64***		NS
Age Marriage < Age Childbirth	44.05	(506)		
Age Marriage = Age Childbirth	38.54	(155)		
Age Marriage > Age Childbirth	40.81	(45)		
CONTINUITY OF ROLES				
Schooling:		NS		F= 10.76**
Interrupted			8,287	(206)
Not Interrupted			6,847	(669)
Work:		F=25.59***		F=389.87***
Interrupted	64.59	(255)	5,635	(255)
Not Interrupted	58.60	(621)	6,237	(621)

[a] Job prestige is measured on a scale ranging from 15 to 82, with a mean of 45, for this cohort.

[b] Annual income is examined for full-time workers only.

[c] Effective N: sample size after adjusting for differential case weighting (Wise, McLaughlin, & Steel, 1977)

[d] The symbol: < means the event to the left occurred before the event to the right;
= means the two events occurred at the same time;
> means the event to the left occurred after the event to the right.

*p <.05
**p <.01
***p <.001

Table 2

Relationships between Timing, Sequencing, and Continuity of Life Events and Quality of Life as of Age 29[a]

Life Course Variable (Approx. N)[b]	Material Well-Being		Health and Safety		Relationship with Spouse		Having & Raising Children		Learning		Occupation	
	Mean	Significance	Mean	Significance	Mean	Significance	Mean	Significance	Mean	Significance	Mean	Significance
COMPARATIVE TIMING OF ROLE TRANSITIONS												
Completion of School:		F=3.01*		NS		NS		F=3.50*		F=7.30***		F=3.13*
Early (100)	3.54						4.20		3.45		3.91	
On-Time (575)	3.77						4.14		3.60		3.90	
Late (120)	3.64						3.88		3.89		3.65	
Starting Work:		NS		NS		NS		F=5.11***		NS		F=7.52***
Early (190)							3.96				4.08	
On-Time (940)							4.12				3.81	
Late (225)							4.28				3.72	
Marriage:		F=3.49*		F=3.60*		NS		F=5.25**		NS		NS
Early (150)	3.62		4.15				4.31					
On-Time (825)	3.78		4.33				4.28					
Late (190)	3.88		4.29				4.03					
Birth of First Child:		F=8.82***		F=6.43**		NS		F=3.85*		NS		NS
Early (165)	3.50		4.12				4.28					
On-Time (600)	3.78		4.31				4.44					
Late (165)	3.91		4.43				4.51					
ORDERING OF ROLE TRANSITIONS[c]												
Complete School-Start Work:		NS		NS		NS		NS		F=3.76*		NS
Age School < Age Work (270)									3.55			
Age School = Age Work (170)									3.64			
Age School > Age Work (250)									3.77			
Complete School-Marriage:		NS		NS		NS		NS		F=4.09*		F=3.86*
Age School < Age Marriage (220)									3.60		4.01	
Age School = Age Marriage (110)									3.52		3.71	
Age School > Age Marriage (260)									3.79		3.87	
Complete School-Birth First Child:		NS		F=4.05*		NS		NS		F=3.16*		NS
Age School < Age Childbirth (320)			4.26						3.62			
Age School = Age Childbirth (50)			3.94						3.51			
Age School > Age Childbirth (80)			4.34						3.86			

(continued)

Table 2, continued

Life Course Variable (Approx. N)[b]	Material Well-Being		Health and Safety		Relationship with Spouse		Having & Raising Children		Learning		Occupation	
	Mean	Significance	Mean	Significance	Mean	Significance	Mean	Significance	Mean	Significance	Mean	Significance
Start Work-Marriage:		NS		NS		NS		NS		F=4.14*		NS
Age Work < Age Marriage (595)									3.71			
Age Work = Age Marriage (105)									3.71			
Age Work > Age Marriage (460)									3.56			
Start work-Birth of First Child:		NS		NS		NS		F=4.08**		NS		NS
Age Work < Age Childbirth (570)							4.48					
Age Work = Age Childbirth (70)							4.24					
Age Work > Age Childbirth (290)							4.37					
Marriage-Birth of First Child:		F=4.77**		F=3.93*		F=3.08*		F=3.14*		NS		NS
Age Marriage < Age Childbirth (680)	3.81		4.34		4.37		4.46		NS		NS	
Age Marriage = Age Childbirth (180)	3.58		4.15		4.22		4.37					
Age Marriage > Age Childbirth (60)	3.69		4.24		4.11		4.24					

Notes: a. Quality of life is measured by the respondents' ratings of each life domain on a 5-point scale with 1 = very dissatisfied and 5 = extremely well satisfied.

b. Effective N: Sample size after adjusting for differential case weighting (Wise, McLaughlin, & Steel, 1977).

c. The symbol < means the event to the left occurred before the event to the right.
The symbol = means the two events occurred at the same time.
The symbol > means the event to the left occurred after the event to the right.

* $P \leq .05$
** $P \leq .01$
*** $P \leq .001$